CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter discusses varies discipline methods that parent(s) may use to discipline their child(ren). The methods represented in this chapter stress active listening and logical consequences. Most importantly, they stress respect for each other.

Introduction

The nature/nurture conflict gives parents and child development specialists cause for much discussion. A child's temperament and, therefore, his actions are indeed greatly affected by his gene pool. How a parent is able to deal with that child and his actions will considerably affect the outcome of his upbringing.

It is widely accepted that a child whose needs are attended with reasonable speed will learn that the world is a dependable place. This trust in others gives him the base he needs to develop trust in the most important person in the world - himself.

Some parents believe they will spoil a child if they give too much attention to the child as an infant. They do not hold the child frequently, do not believe in rocking a child, and allow the child to cry for long periods of time instead of picking him/her up. Children cannot be spoiled by parents who provide loving care. But the parents must respect themselves enough, not to allow the child to become a tyrant over them.

Parents who are realistic and consistent in their expectations of their children will raise children with firm foundations for independence. Independence for their children should be the goal of parents. What do parents need to do for their children, to show they are realistic and consistent, and to pass along the love and respect children need?

Infants' needs must be met reasonably. If a child cries, he/she is signaling he/she is either hungry, wet, or uncomfortable. A parent must attend to an infant in a reasonable time to teach the infant trust. Infants need verbal and tactile stimulation from the parent. A parent's talking, cooing, or singing to an infant increases the child's learning process. Tactile stimulation of holding and rocking are necessary for the infant's emotional health and growth.

On the practical side, infants should live in clean, safe surroundings. This includes regular baths and diaper changes, being fed regularly as directed by a physician, and receiving regular checkups and immunizations.

What a parent does for and with an infant is expanded, as the child grows older and more independent.

The older child continues to need verbal and tactile stimulation. This can be provided in the way a parent shows affection and teaches his/her child about life. The older child needs consistent care, which includes encouragement to learn by being allowed to explore his/her surroundings. When the child is school age, the parent must express

encouragement of learning by being interested in his/her school attendance and progress.

As a child becomes an adolescent the parenting task becomes different, yet the same. The older child is preparing to become independent of the parent. It is at this time that realistic and consistent parenting will pay off. A child raised with respect will generally respond with respect to his/her parent.

A parent should never relax in his/her role as a parent. A parent must always be on the job to provide nurture, love, acceptance, guidance, discipline, and the many other needs of his/her children. Unfortunately, many parents do not have this knowledge. Or if they have the knowledge, do not or cannot put it to use.

The Children's Service Worker's job with his/her clients is to retrain them in their parenting task. The younger the child they parent, the easier is our task. The workers must teach the parent about child development, parenting techniques, alternative discipline methods, and self-respect. The worker does not have to wait until self-esteem is in place to begin the other lessons. It is essential for the parents to realize self respect is the most important thing they can provide the child.

A Children's Service Worker can provide the personal counseling for self-esteem building and can provide the parenting information needed. Also available are CTS providers, such as parent aides, therapists, and referrals to Parents as First Teachers.

The earlier a parent learns how to nurture their child, the better chance that child and family has in succeeding.

Parenting Techniques for Four Stages of Child Development

Clear parent/child interaction is the result of a wide variety of factors whose effects begin even before the child is born. How a person was reared, what type of family values, societal values, etc. a person brings with him to the parenting field, play a major role. The sex and temperament of the child also are important components. There is the chance of a mis-fit between child and parent on many different levels. There are also many avenues to adjustment. That is why understanding parenting techniques and child development help parents with this difficult job.

Parenting techniques abound. Many are excellent, but none are practical for all children under all circumstances. Parenting techniques can be divided into four stages: Infancy, toddler, school age, and adolescence.

1. Parenting Techniques in Infancy

The parents' objectives in relation to the infant are to develop a mutually satisfactory, reciprocal relationship and to actively help the baby learn to trust a dependable adult. Note the words "mutually satisfactory." It is as important for the parent as for the child to feel good about the relationship. Two obstacles to

parental satisfaction are 1) it may be some time before the baby can respond in a recognizable way, as by smiling or laughing, and 2) the baby doesn't talk, which means he/she is pretty hard to understand. It is easy to get frustrated by the one-sided conversation. Several important parenting techniques follow.

- **Learn to read your baby.** This can be summarized by the old railroad sign, "Stop, Look, and Listen."

  Stop: Pay attention.

  Look: Facial expressions and body movements like back arching (distress) or turning toward someone (usually pleasure). Among other cues, there are signs of tension or relaxation that can guide the parent.

  Listen: To sounds such as vocalizations, crying, gurgling.

  Taken together, “look” and “listen” can help the parent figure out the puzzle and can help the parent learn how to respond. If one thing does not work, try something else. Guessing is part of the game with infants.

- **Don't be afraid of spoiling.** Babies cannot be spoiled. They do have needs and try their best to express them - often by crying. When the parent attends to the distressed baby, he/she is helping to instill trust - trust that mom or dad will take care of the infant.

  Because some parents have little knowledge of child development, their expectations in the area of infant care may be inappropriate. Many infants are in serious danger because a parent cannot understand why a child cries. A child's crying is extremely frustrating to a parent when they cannot calm or hush their child. In Dr. Benjamin Spock's book Baby and Child Care he devotes several pages to this subject. He discusses several types of infants who cry. The infant with colic (pain, distension, gas), periodic irritable crying (no distension), fretful baby (fretful spells during early weeks) and hypertonic baby (tense and restless during early weeks). Dr. Spock recommends various methods of dealing with children's crying from limited walking and rocking to looking for medical reasons.

- **Talk and read to the baby.** A parent can sing or hum, even recite the traffic regulations. What a parent says is less important than the parent saying it. Even newborns move in rhythm to the sound of a human voice. For older babies, the parent's voice establishes the possibility of communication and also helps the baby to begin to understand language.

- **Deal with undesirable behavior appropriately.** Being full grown means that a parent can easily alter most baby behaviors that bothers the parent. For example, a parent can:

- Change the baby's environment by turning him or her around or taking the baby to another room;

- Distract the baby with a different object;

- Use motion to change the scene by walking the baby or lifting him/her to the shoulder.

- **Don't hit, slap, or shake.** The baby is still too young to understand social requirements. Sadly, from physical punishment the baby learns that the people one loves can cause pain and that aggression is an acceptable way to express feelings.

2. Parenting Techniques for Toddlers

Formerly horizontal (laying down), the child can now stand/walk and is full of energy as he/she strikes out to explore the world. As motor skills improve, nothing is too bizarre to try - for example, climbing up on dresser drawers or hopping out the window. The child's energy seems inexhaustible, especially to the caretaker, who must be on the lookout for possible dangers.

Also inexhaustible is the child's curiosity. Each new experience is received with a burst of delight. The toddler can absorb all kinds of stimuli, which will be grist for his/her developing cognitive processes.

During this period, the child begins to give up the infantile needs of the first year. The child leaves the parents to explore new situations and new people, but continues to need to come back to them as a place of safety.

At this time the child may also show a need to overreact, to be overly negative in speech and behavior, to defy, to do whatever is forbidden. This is another way of separating from the parents and asserting independence. It is also a response to the parents' insistence on curbing dangerous or antisocial behavior.

The goals of the parent are to define the toddler's area of functioning and keep him or her out of danger, to help the child begin to differentiate acceptable from unacceptable behavior, to support the budding sense of identity, and to help the child separate as comfortably as possible. Basic to these goals, of course, is the sense of trust that was fostered in the infant. In addition, the alert parent will provide a range of experiences to satisfy the child's boundless curiosity. Some useful techniques follow:

- **Let the toddler go.** Let him or her move away from the parent, then back, over and over. Toddlers need to practice repeatedly in order to get the feel of the new experience, to try out their abilities, and to test his/her parent's reactions. The repeated nature of the performance may be annoying to parents, so it helps to view this period as a learning time, a step toward the

separation that will be signified by school attendance. In adult life, too, hours of drill are necessary for a finished performance, be it typing, drafting, or playing the piano.

- **Be ready with affection, but don't press it.** Some of the time it's essential for the toddler to be the bold explorer. Eventually, the toddler will return to have his or her "motor" charged with the kind of affection enjoyed before.

- **Continue to read to the toddler**. The time spent reading to the infant should continue into the toddler phase. It provides excellent parent-child interaction and stimulates the child's desire to learn new things.

- **Stay away from a tangled mass of rules.** Like all children, the toddler needs structure, continuity, and firmness, but these should arise from the way the family is organized rather than from rules. For the toddler to remember and obey them, the few rules should be important and basic, such as do not turn on the stove, or no playing in the driveway.

- **The parent makes the decisions.** Tell the toddler what will happen next and assume that he or she will go along. Major decisions are hard for a child in this stage, which is characterized by ambivalence. Take, for example, the situation where a toddler is to be examined by a doctor. The child may choose which ear will be examined first, but he or she should not have the say as to whether the examination occurs at all.

- **Realize that a toddler's ability to understand a rule does not imply ability to act on it.** Toddlers have an amazing comprehension of language and can understand most simple communications. At this age, however, they have not acquired the inner control we call conscience. One can sometimes observe a child in the midst of a forbidden act, while he or she murmurs, "No, don't do it." Understanding and acting on the understanding are two separate things with many months of maturing in between.

- **Recognize and deal with your frustrations.** To handle the toddler's no's and negative behavior, a parent needs a saving sense of humor plus the realization of what the child's behavior means - the beginning of independence.

  As with most individuals, adults and children alike, a boost for good behavior is more effective than criticism for unwanted behavior. The boost might be a pat on the back, an arm over the shoulder, a word of praise, a smile, or a kiss. But what do you do when the toddler has exhausted all patience, humor, and tolerance - especially when a crucial safety rule has been broken endangering the child? This is a good time for what Thomas Gordon, founder and president of Effectiveness Training Inc. calls an "I" message - verbally expressing how you feel and why. For example, "I get awfully upset when you pinch the baby, because she may get hurt." And then a parent has

to follow the "I message" with something to impress the child with the seriousness of the act - keep him or her seated for five minutes, hold in abeyance a special treat, or something similar. But in addition to talking to the child, a parent needs a way to work out their feelings. Kids can make parents angry. There is nothing wrong with that. But, a parent has to find his or her own way to handle the anger so that he/she feels better but doesn't take it out on the toddler.

- **Toilet Training**: In his book Baby and Child Care, Dr. Benjamin Spock goes into a lengthy discussion of toilet training. He discusses looking for signs of a child's readiness to train, parental attitudes, type of chair, and time frames. He concludes by recommending training is best done when a child is between 18 and 24 months. By knowing this kind of information about their infants, parents can be helped by knowing their child is not crying on purpose to harass the parent or the child's refusal to use the potty chair is not because he is enjoying seeing his parent fail. The more education parents have, the more able they are to handle the situation in a non-punitive way.

3. Parenting Techniques for School Age Children

The back and forth process of separating from and reuniting with parents has been largely settled by the time the child reaches school age, and the child is ready for the first major step away from home. The new tasks are to tackle academic subjects and learn how to get along with peers and authorities other than mom and dad. The child is curious about how things work and is willing to spend many hours on hobbies and intriguing games. The early school years are the time for laying down work attitudes that will be useful throughout the child's life.

Parents can do much to help. They can help the child interpret the new world of school. When the child has accomplished something, the parents can provide an appreciative audience. At other times they can be the refuge as he or she experiences inevitable failures. Most importantly, the parents can assist the child in understanding and beginning to take responsibility for himself or herself. Following are some ways to do these things.

- **Communicate together.** Always important, communication is vital at this stage, if the child is to adapt to the world of learning. There's school, other people, and the child himself or herself - each new encounter crammed with surprises and interesting discoveries that need to be discussed. Sometimes the child will boast a bit, or a lot, at this stage. This is the way a child of this age continues building self-esteem.

- **Let the child go backward sometimes.** No child can win all the time. When the child makes a mistake and feels bad, he/she may want to act like a baby again for a little while. This doesn't last, but it can be a valuable source of comfort when things get tough.

- **Help the child find alternate ways of behaving.** School-age children often don't give much thought to their actions or responses. When something goes wrong and the child is hurt or in trouble as a result, the parent can use the opportunity to talk about the troublesome behavior and help the child understand. Help the child figure out other ways of acting that might have had a happier outcome. A child gains confidence as he learns of alternatives and chooses among them. Thus the child's limited repertory of behavior is expanded and at the same time his or her self-esteem is enhanced.

- **Assign appropriate responsibilities.** Children like to contribute to the family, at least they like it part of the time. Responsibilities within the child's abilities should be assigned with the expectation that they will be carried out.

4. Parenting Techniques for children at Adolescence

This is a stage of mixtures. The adolescent reviews and repeats all the developmental stages to date as he/she struggles toward adulthood. Learning to trust another person, acquiring a solid identity, addressing the question of careers - all these and more come together for a final rerun and one hopes for settlement. Questions of intimacy, affective relationships, morality, peer associations, and life goals are tremendously important as the adolescent tries on various hats in an attempt to choose his or her life style.

A new element is the physical evidence of maturing sexuality, accompanied by strong, often conflicting feelings. All at once, it seems, there is a new kind of body, which is feeling and acting and thinking in strange and somewhat frightening ways. This means the adolescent must rework his or her self-image, still distressingly fragile. No wonder so many children are tormented by self-consciousness at this stage of life.

The adolescent goes from child to adult and back with the speed of light. Changes in a boy's voice symbolize the adolescent's status; when he opens his mouth the boy himself does not know whether he will sound like an eight year old Boy Scout or a 28 year old football hero.

The adolescent demands more privileges and freedoms than ever before (for example, concerning dating and driving) but may still have little sense of responsibility for his or her actions. At this stage much adolescent behavior is geared to peer standards because the approval of peers is far more desired than parental approval. Parents are viewed as impossibly naive, embarrassingly square, and very ancient.

The bewildering and rapid changes in the adolescent suggest that the parents' role at this stage is limited. The adolescent is again going through the separation process, this time for keeps, and must make his or her own decisions to the

greatest extent possible. The wise parent does not intrude except in cases of dire need, painful as it may often be to all concerned.

What a parent can do is to maintain and uphold the values established over the long years of rearing the child, now an adolescent. The adolescent can be expected to abandon those values sometimes and to come back to them at other times. Important techniques for parents of adolescents are described below.

- **Trust the adolescent to come through to responsible adulthood.** This is a tall order, especially when a parent is worried sick about the adolescent's friends, activities, and attitudes. It is hard to represent family values, and trust that the child will eventually adopt them. Take hope in the fact that even adolescence cannot last forever, and things will settle eventually.

- **Provide structure, limits, and standards.** Important for a child of any age, these concepts are crucial for the adolescent who is subject to so much rapid change in himself or herself. Despite objections and defiance, the adolescent needs the knowledge that some things remain constant and dependable. Reasonable limits and standards also help withstand the inevitable testing. If parents fail to uphold their own commitments, the child will continue with more and more testing, he/she will become increasingly anxious if he/she perceives no boundaries, which are needed for a sense of reality.

- **Let your affection show.** When the child reaches adolescence, even formerly demonstrative parents may begin to withdraw physically just at the time when the child may need such evidence of affection.

- **Let the child go.** Letting go can be hard, especially if the adolescent is the first or the last child. Just as the adolescent must establish an identity, the parent must be willing to permit his or her own identity to change. Following this period, the parent will no longer be essential for protecting, nurturing and teaching. His or her role with the new young adult will have a flavor of colleague to colleague.

Summary

It has been said that the main job of a parent is to become dispensable.

Parenting is one of the toughest jobs a person will ever undertake. It is probably the most important job a person will ever do. Being fully informed of job expectations and trained in job skills will help with a job that is a lifetime commitment.

DISCIPLINE

Introduction

The word discipline means many things to many people. In approaching the subject of discipline with many families, what they perceive as discipline and what the Children's Service Worker believes is discipline should be considered.

As Children's Service Workers, we see discipline described and acted upon as "punishment" with many of our abusing/neglecting families. Our families generally have little understanding of child development and their expectations for their children are not realistic with their children's ability to perform.

Many of our families have been reared in homes where their parents knew little about parenting. These situations perpetuate the cycle for poor discipline/parenting techniques.

We see families where inappropriate parental expectations have been debilitating to children. Children perceive themselves as being worthless, failures, and disappointing to adults.

We see families where children's needs are ignored and children who fail to develop a basic sense of trust in self and others. Children develop a tragically low self-esteem, which does not increase their ability to successfully parent later on in life.

We work with families who think of punishment as a proper disciplinary measure and defend their right to use it. This perpetuates the abusive cycle because out of self-preservation the child grows into an adult who identifies with the punishing parent. This adult then uses punishment to manage his/her own insecurities.

In some families we see discipline/parenting is nonexistent and role reversal (the parent acting like a helpless child and expecting their child to parent them) occurs. The effect on children is destructive. They do not get the opportunity to pass through the developmental stages that bring a child to healthy adulthood.

Working with families requires the Children's Service Worker to understand their families' own ideas of discipline. They need to clarify to themselves, as well as the family, what discipline is. The worker also needs to offer alternatives to the families so parenting successes can be enjoyed by the family.

Punishment vs. Discipline

To first understand and clarify for the Children's Service Worker what discipline is, a look at punishment is in order.

First, punishment is not the same as discipline. Punishment is used to hurt. The theory of punishment is that a child will avoid pain, therefore, if an act will lead to pain, the child will not commit the act. This type of thinking perpetuates the cycle of CA/N since it is rare for intentionally inflicted pain to have any positive influence on a child. What

actually motivates desirable behavior is a close, loving, emotionally meaningful relationship with the parent. We see families where the children have become "immune" to pain or have become the aggressors. Both types of children have many obstacles to overcome so as to not perpetuate this same behavior on their child; thus continuing the cycle of abuse.

Discipline on the other hand is a positive learning experience that sets behavioral limits and guidelines to lead children to and through adulthood.

The purposes of discipline are threefold. First, discipline teaches a child to achieve for himself. Secondly, it leads a child to self-discipline so he will behave without parental guidance. Thirdly, discipline helps a child develop a sense of pride and pleasure when he/she does something right.

That children need discipline is clear. Usually, however, they need to be disciplined far less than parents think.

- Discipline is not punishment.
- Discipline is not shame or guilt.
- Discipline helps the child to think.
- Discipline helps the child to learn so that his present and future behavior is changed.
- Discipline helps the child to grow intellectually and emotionally; it enhances his self-confidence and self-image.
- Discipline is best taught by example.

Discipline is designed to help the child control and change his/her behavior, thereby guiding the child into adulthood. Abuse, on the other hand, does not take the child's future needs into consideration. It is not designed to help the child learn socially acceptable ways of expressing natural desires and drives. Abuse dumps an adult's feelings on the child in a harmful or neglectful way. This satisfies the adult's needs, but it does not satisfy the child's needs.

Discipline helps the child learn a lesson that will carry over and positively affect future behavior. Abuse has the opposite effect. It affects the child's future behavior in ways that are increasingly less desirable to the parents. Abuse leads to more anger, more hatred, more deviant activity, which in later life are frequently vented against society.

Discipline enhances the child's sense of self-worth. It helps the child learn self-control, a quality he/she can take pride in. Discipline helps the child fit into the family and society in a comfortable way, which leads him/her to conclude that he/she is basically a good, strong, and effective person.

Discipline is not shame or guilt. Discipline teaches the child to use his/her own resources in the future rather than to depend on the parents. Discipline helps the child grow. It neither stunts his/her growth nor destroys his/her self-confidence. Ultimately, the reason an older child does the "right" thing is that he/she doesn't like him/herself as well if he/she does the wrong thing. Discipline helps develop a sense of self-worth, the most important ingredient necessary for a child's positive behavior in the future.

Discipline is best taught by example, but so is abuse. The vast majority of abusive parents were themselves abused as children, and abusive parenting behavior is many times handed down from one generation to the next. The examples of behavior a parent sets are the lessons the child is learning - not through parent's words, not through parent's intent, but through what the child sees the parent do.

Good discipline includes creating an atmosphere of quiet firmness, clarity, and conscientiousness while using reasoning. In order to accomplish this, parents must see their children as worthy human beings and be sincere in dealing with them.

How Discipline Works

Discipline is an essential part of parenting. Without guidance children are not well prepared for life nor are they well prepared to parent. This is our daily challenge when we work with our families. The job appears overwhelming especially if there is little parenting background available to our families. Our challenge is to stress to families the need to interact on a mutually enjoyable basis more frequently so they can come to truly like and even love each other. When families resort to physical pain, fear, and ego-deflating name calling, the potential for true love, mutual respect and constructive influence is lost in the parent/child relationship. When it is not defined or incorrectly defined we see the parent/child relationship, the family, in trouble.

It is essential to realize children can respond to their parents' behavioral desire, only when they are physically mature enough to do so.

- **Early Childhood**

  Early childhood is not a time for lengthy explanations. With a preschool child, a parent should be giving their child the maximum opportunity to experience freedom within a carefully thought out space.

  Early school age children need some degree of firmness, which allows the child to explore cause and effect relationships so they may learn by consequences. These children require more explanation and accentuating of the positives.

- **Later Childhood**

  From ages nine or ten up to age thirteen a parent can exert subtle discipline by helping their child stay busy, keeping them away from inappropriate company, and involving them in organizations and activities. Helping children structure their lives so that their free time is used constructively will reduce the chances of them getting into trouble. If problems do develop, it is of utmost importance to work closely with the school to head them off before they become more serious.

- **Adolescence**

  It is at this time that an adolescent is establishing his/her own sense of personal identity. A parent must keep in mind their "child" is trying to be his/her own person. A parent who tries to "control" his/her child at this stage of development should be prepared for rebellion. A parent must always keep in mind the child is breaking away, and trying his wings.

  Respecting this child's desire to be independent, but being always cognizant of the dependency will keep lines of communication open. Listening and gently guiding the adolescent into his "own" decisions will help keep the tantrums, harsh words and sullenness at a manageable level.

  Many parents who report their adolescents as the "problem" in the family have not provided a foundation upon which to build a trusting relationship based on respect and communication. The Children's Service Worker's job begins as referee. The worker starts by calming family fighting, then defines issues, and chooses a method to manage behavior. Parents need to know chronic or persistent misbehavior is a means of communicating unfulfilled and unrecognized needs.

Types of Discipline Models

This section will attempt to briefly describe some of the popular discipline programs used and taught by various professionals. The purpose of this section is to familiarize the Children's Service Worker with the existence of these programs and not to teach each program.

Foster Cline

Foster W. Cline, M.D., is a noted child psychiatrist who is director of Evergreen Consultant in Human Behavior in Evergreen, Colorado. Dr. Cline has three basic rules on discipline:

1. Avoid control battles if possible;

2. If a control battle cannot be avoided, win it if possible; and

3. If a control battle cannot be avoided, make sure you pick the right issue.

Dr. Cline teaches two fundamental issues to be handled correctly if children are going to learn to react responsibly. One, he states parents must divide all problems into two groups: 1) those that impact on the child; and 2) those that impact on the parent.

Secondly, parents must separate their own emotional needs from the needs of their children. This is called the "Whose Problem" problem.

Dr. Cline is an advocate of letting consequences follow their natural course. He thinks consequences should be enforceable, fit the "crime," and be laid down firmly and with love.

Cline has developed a "Good Neighbor Policy" in dealing with children. He says, "if parents want their children to grow up to be good neighbors, they must treat their children like good neighbors."

Dr. Cline is adamant that parents must love themselves in order to teach/model healthy self-esteem for their children. He goes on to say:

- Worried parents raise worrisome kids; insecure parents raise insecure kids.

- Authoritarian parents raise stubborn kids; helpless parents raise children who take advantage of them.

- Watchful parents raise kids who won't look.

Cline sums up what is essential to insure children have a solid foundation:

- Be aware of the importance of infancy.

- Give a child lots of cuddles, touch, stimulation and smiles.

- Make sure the child is well nourished, not fat.

- Throughout infancy and the toddler phase say "no" as little as possible but mean business when you say it.

- Remember that you must first take good care of yourself around your child.

The above material was excerpted from Foster Cline's Parent Education Text.

PET and STEP

Dr. Thomas Gordon, a licensed clinical psychologist, developed Parent Effectiveness Training (PET). The PET method shows parents the pitfalls of being strict or lenient. In PET parents learn an alternative, the "no-lose method", for resolving family conflicts. The results of PET are in forming close, warmer relationships, and punishment is not used. In PET parents learn the skill of nonevaluative listening (active listening) and honest communication of their feelings. Active listening helps children come up with their own solutions to problems. This method stresses the use of "I messages." This skill, when learned, guides parents to the effective management of conflict in their homes.

Don Dinkmeyer, Ph.D. and Gary McRay, Ph.D developed Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP). This program begins with the premise it is designed to help parents relate more effectively to their children by using a training course.

The STEP manual introduction states that our society has changed from an autocratic attitude to a democratic attitude and toward social equality. Children have recently tended to believe they should have the rights and the parents should have the responsibility. This has caused conflicts between parent and child.

The STEP model starts first with training parents to understand their children's behaviors. Behavior can best be understood by observing the consequences. Parents are taught to train themselves to look at the results of misbehavior rather than just at the misbehavior. The manual tells parents the goals of misbehavior are attention, power, revenge, and display of inadequacy.

Parents are then taught active listening and natural consequence techniques to enable a more positive relationship. The STEP manual teaches mutual respect, taking time for fun, encouragement, communicating love, and building relationships.

This model is similar to PET, but some experts say STEP is more effective with younger children and pre-teens and PET is more effective with adolescents. STEP has a more "hands on" natural and logical consequences approach than PET, which is more effective with children than adolescents who are more capable of making their own decisions.

ABC Model and Behavior Modification Techniques

The ABC model is used in teaching Children's Division (CD) behavioral foster parents to deal with the foster child's behavior as an alternative to corporal punishment.

- **The A stands for antecedents**. What is going on just before the behavior occurs?

- **The B stands for the behavior**. The focus is on behavior which is observable.

- **The C stands for consequences.** The questions are asked: What was the reaction immediately following the behavior? How was the behavior reinforced?

After analyzing troublesome behaviors by using the ABC model, a plan is developed to modify the behaviors by using positive reinforcement and logical consequences.

Behavior modification is a program where expectations/goals are structured and directed. When dealing with children who have a history of anti-social behavior and where most forms of discipline have already been used, it is recommended to use behavior modification only in the positive approach, at least until the program is fully established.

In setting up a program a parent must identify and simplify the problems they desire most to work on. They should write them down and count the number of times the behavior takes place in a given time period. They should do this more than once. The parents should look at the list again; if an item on the list does not seem to be the problem a parent had thought it was, it can be crossed off. The parent should start with only one or two of the most major problems, or the problem that "bugs" them the most.

The parent should then design a chart. There will be such items as make bed, do dishes, pick up personal belongings, take bath. Other items will need to be converted from a negative to a positive. An example would be a child that throws temper tantrums. Instead of taking something away or punishing the child, a parent will give a positive stroke for not having a tantrum for a predetermined time period. It would be written on the chart as "no tantrum" or "no screaming or cussing." For an older child who has some control over his behavior, the time period would be longer (i.e., a whole day). For a younger child that is out of control, a shorter time is needed (i.e., a timer set for 15 minutes). Whatever time period is used, it should be based on the severity of the misbehavior. This is called the base line. A parent always works with a time period in which the child can have success. The time period can be lengthened periodically as the child continues to have success meeting his/her goal.

Motivation: Before starting a behavior modification program, a parent must decide what motivates the child. This is perhaps the most difficult part of setting up a program because the results will be in direct relationship to the child's desire for the rewards.

Sometimes it is good to look at why the child misbehaves. If the behavior is attention getting, then a good reward might be a special time period alone with mother, father, or whoever's attention the child wants. Rewards do not need to be candy or toys or cost a lot of money. If material items are used, it must be something the child really wants and will not likely get any other way. With young children immediate rewards that are small such as a stick of gum, stars on the chart, stickers, pennies, glass of fruit juice, or a hug are practical rewards.

For children who can wait a day or two for their reward, they may want to do things with a parent such as reading a story together, play a game, going for a walk, or baking cookies. Some other ideas are letting the child choose the supper menu, putting money in a jar, soda pop, popcorn, stickers, ice cream sundae.

For an older child, whose desire for material items is greater and who can wait longer for rewards, a written chart or list that shows a certain number of points buys certain rewards is another practical reward system. Low cost items on the list can be toys, going out to dinner, the ball game, to the park, C D's, tapes, books, overnight guest, roller skating, bowling or new clothes.

To review the steps in setting up a behavior modification program using a chart:

1. Isolate the most disruptive behavior;
2. Count the frequency of the misbehavior (baseline measurement);
3. Decide on the rewards - use child's input when possible;
4. Make a chart;
5. Explain the program to the child;
6. Do not nag, remind, punish - let the chart do the work - not the parent;
7. Follow through with the rewards - do not delay;
8. Be consistent - no excuses.

Time-out: Time-out involves placing your child on a chair for a short period of time following the occurrence of an unacceptable behavior. This procedure has been effective in reducing problem behaviors such as tantrums, hitting, biting, failure to follow directions, leaving the yard without permission, and others. Parents have found that time-out works better than spanking, yelling, or threatening their children. It is most appropriate for children from 18 months through 10 years.

Edward R. Christophertsen, Michael A. Rapoff, and Raoul Berman, University of Kansas Medical Center, Department of Pediatrics, 1977, provide these guidelines for using time-out as discipline.

Preparations:

1. You should purchase a small portable kitchen timer.
2. A place for time-out should be selected. This could be a chair in the hallway, kitchen, or corner of a room. It needs to be a dull place (not your child's

bedroom) where your child cannot view the TV or play with toys. It should NOT be a dark, scary, or dangerous place. The aim is to remove your child to a place where not much is happening, not to make your child afraid.

3. You should discuss with your spouse which behaviors will result in time-out. Consistency is very important.

Practicing:

1. Before using time-out for discipline, you should practice using it with your child at a pleasant time.

2. Tell your child there are two rules when in time-out:

   Rule 1: The timer will start when he is quiet. Ask your child what would happen if he talks or makes noises when in time-out. Your child should say the timer will be reset or something similar. If he does not say this, remind him of the rule.

   Rule 2: If he gets off the chair before the timer rings, you will return him to the chair and reset the timer. Ask your child if he wants to get off the chair and get additional minutes added to the time-out to learn this rule. Children generally decline this offer.

3. After explaining the rules and checking out your child's understanding of the rules, go through the steps under "Procedure." Tell your child you are "pretending" this time.

4. Mention to your child you will be using this technique instead of spanking, yelling, or threatening. Most kids are pleased to learn this.

Procedure:

Step 1: Following an inappropriate behavior, say to the child, "Oh, you (describe what the child did)." For example, "You hit your sister. Go to time-out please." Say this calmly and only once. It is important not to lose your temper or begin nagging. If your child has problems getting to the chair quickly, guide him with as little effort as needed. This can range from leading the child part way by the hand to carrying the child to the chair. If you have to carry your child to the chair, be sure to hold him facing away from you so he doesn't confuse a hug with a trip to time-out.

Step 2: When your child is on the chair and quiet, set the time for a specific number of minutes. The rule of thumb is one minute for each year of age up to five minutes. A two year old would have two minutes; a three year old, three minutes; and a five year old, five minutes. For children five years and above, five minutes is the maximum amount of time. If your child makes noises, screams, or

cries, reset the timer. Do this each time the child makes any noises. If your child gets off the chair before the time is up, replace the child on the chair, and reset the timer. Do this each time the child gets off the chair.

Step 3: After your child has been quiet and seated for the required amount of time, the timer will ring. Go to the time-out chair and ask your child if he would like to get up. Do not speak from across the room. A nod of the head or a positive or neutral answer is required. Answering in an angry tone of voice or refusing to answer is not acceptable. If your child is still mad, he will probably get into trouble again in a short period of time. Should your child answer in an angry tone or refuse to answer, reset the timer. Your child may then answer appropriately, but once the time is reset it must go to the full amount of time. You are the one who should decide when your child gets off the time-out chair, not your child.

Step 4: As soon as your child is off the time-out chair, you should ask if he wishes to repeat the behavior which led him there in the first place. For example, "Would you like to hit your sister again so I can put you in time-out and then you will learn the rule?" Generally, children say no or shake their head. You can then say, "I'm happy you don't want to hit your sister." If your child should take you up on this offer and repeat the unacceptable behavior, calmly place him in time-out. Although this may sound like you are daring your child to misbehave, it is better if he repeats the behavior in your presence. That way, your child will have several opportunities to learn that unacceptable behaviors result in time-out.

Step 5: After your child finishes a time-out period, he should start with a "clean slate." It is not necessary to discuss, remind, or nag about what the child did wrong. Within five minutes after time-out, look for and praise good behavior. It would be wise to take your child to a different part of the house and start him in a new activity. Remember, catch 'em being good.

Briefly, the following is a summary of time-out rules:

For Parents:

- Decide which behaviors you will use time-out for ahead of time. Discuss these with your child.
- Don't leave your child in time-out and forget about him.
- Don't nag, scold, or talk to your child when he is in time-out. All family members should follow this rule!
- Remain calm, particularly when your child is being testy.

For Children:

- Go immediately to time-out when you're asked to. Don't argue.
- Remain quiet and stay on the time-out chair until you're asked to get down. You'll spend less time that way.
- The timer is not to be touched by any child in the house. If you do touch it, you will be placed in time-out.

For Brothers and Sisters:

- If you tease, laugh at, or talk with your brother or sister while they are in time-out, you will be placed on the chair and your brother or sister will get down.

Things to Check When Time-out Doesn't Work:

1. Be sure you are not warning your child one (or more) time before sending him/her to the time-out chair. Warnings only teach your child that he/she can misbehave at least once (or more) before you'll use time-out. Warnings only make things worse, not better.

2. All adults who are responsible for disciplining the child at home should be using the time-out chair. You should agree when and for what behaviors to send your child to time-out. (You will want new sitters, visiting friends, and relatives to read and discuss the time-out guidelines.)

3. In order to maximize the effectiveness of time-out, you must make the rest of the day ("time-in") pleasant for your child. Remember to let your child know when he/she is well behaved ("Catch 'em being good") rather than taking good behavior for granted. Most children would prefer to have you put them in time-out than ignore them completely.

4. Your child may say "Going to the chair doesn't bother me," or "I like time-out." Don't fall for this trick. Many children try to convince their parents that time-out is fun and, therefore, not working. You should notice over time that the problem behaviors for which you use time-out occur less often. (Time-out is not supposed to be a miserable experience.)

5. When you first begin using time-out, your child may act like time-out is a "game." He/She may put him/herself in time-out or ask to go to time-out. If this happens, give your child what he/she wants; that is, put him/her in time-out and require your child to sit quietly for the required amount of time. Your child will soon learn that time-out is not a game. Your child may also laugh or giggle when being placed in time-out or while in time-out. Although this may aggravate you, it is important for you to completely ignore your child when he/she is in time-out.

6. You may feel the need to punish your child for doing something inappropriate in the chair (i.e., cursing, spitting). However, it is very important to ignore your child when he/she behaves badly in time-out. This will teach your child that such "attention-getting" strategies will NOT work. If your child curses when out of the chair (and it bothers you), be sure to put the child in time-out.

7. TV, radio, or a nice view out the window can make time-out more tolerable and prolong the length of time your child must stay in the chair by encouraging him/her to talk. Try to minimize such distractions.

8. You must use time-out for major as well as minor behavior problems. Parents have a tendency to feel that time-out is not enough of a punishment for big things and thereby discipline inconsistently. Consistency is most important for time-out to work for big and small problems.

9. Be certain that your child is aware of the rules, that if broken, result in time-out. Frequently, parents will establish a new rule (i.e., "Don't touch the new stereo") without telling their children. When their children break the rule they don't understand why they are being put in time-out.

10. Review the time-out guidelines to make certain you are following the recommendations. If your child is getting off the chair frequently, be sure to place your child back on the chair and reset the timer.

11. When your child is in time-out:

    Don't: Look at him/her;
    Talk to him/her;
    Talk about him/her;
    Talk/act angry;
    Stay in the room, if possible.

    Do: Remain calm;
    Follow the written guidelines;
    Find something to do (read a magazine, watch TV, listen to the stereo, or phone someone) when your child is crying and talking loudly while in time-out.

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